Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Original)** A method for protecting a thiol group in a protein having a free cysteine residue, which comprises adding a compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein.

2. **(Original)** A method for inhibiting a polymerization reaction of proteins via thiol groups, which comprises protecting a thiol group in a protein having a free cysteine residue by adding a compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein.

3. **(Original)** A method for inhibiting modification of a protein, which comprises protecting a thiol group in a protein having a free cysteine residue by adding a compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein.

4. **(Original)** A method for inhibiting an exchange reaction of a thiol group in a protein with a disulfide bond formed in the molecule or between the molecules of the protein, which comprises protecting a thiol group in a protein having a free cysteine residue by adding a compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~, wherein the compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein is cystine, homocystine, lipoic acid or oxidized glutathione.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~, wherein the compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein is cystine.

7. **(Original)** A method for protecting a thiol group in a protein having a free cysteine residue, which comprises adding a compound which has a disulfide bond in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein simultaneously or separately from a compound

which has a thiol group in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein.

8. **(Original)** The method according to claim 7, wherein the compound which has a thiol group in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein is cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione or dihydrolipoic acid.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 7 ~~or 8~~, wherein the compound which has a thiol group in the molecule and exerts substantially no influence on the activity of the protein is cysteine.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~, wherein the protein is a recombinant protein.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~, wherein the protein is an antibody.

12. **(Original)** The method according to claim 11, wherein the antibody is an $F(ab')_2$ antibody.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 11 ~~or 12~~, wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

14. **(Original)** The method according to claim 13, wherein the monoclonal antibody has a thiol group in its variable region.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 13 ~~or 14~~, wherein the monoclonal antibody has a free cysteine residue in its variable region.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 13 ~~to 15~~, wherein the monoclonal antibody comprises the amino acid sequences represented by SEQ ID NOs:1, 2 and 3 in the Sequence Listing in its heavy chain hypervariable region, and the amino acid sequences represented by SEQ ID NOs:4, 5 and 6 in the Sequence Listing in its light chain hypervariable region.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 13 ~~to 16~~, wherein the monoclonal antibody comprises a heavy chain variable region comprising the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:7 in the Sequence Listing and a light chain variable region

containing the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:8 in the Sequence Listing.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 17~~, wherein the protein is produced by using a cell cultured in a serum-free medium.

19. **(Original)** A protein which is obtainable by the method according to claim 18.

20. **(Currently Amended)** A pharmaceutical composition which comprises the protein according to claim 19 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

21. **(Original)** The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 20, which is an antitumor agent.